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EASTERN EUROPEAN INTELLIGENCER

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Finnish-Rumanian Party Talks Focus on Budapest Meeting

The Budapest meeting was the central theme of talks between high-level Rumanian and Finnish Communist party officials in Bucharest earlier this month

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Among the specific points made by the Rumanians in describing their attitude toward the conference were that countries with more than one Communist party should be allowed to send representatives from each, and no new Comintern/Cominform should be set up. The Rumanians also stressed that greater unity is the main goal of the meeting, non-Communist parties of a non-imperialistic orientation should be invited, and no permanent preparatory committee should be established at Budapest for a later meeting.

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COMMENT: The mere fact that the Rumanians are going to Budapest indicates that little if any substantive significance is likely to stem from the gathering. If, however, Bucharest's representatives should vigorously propose adoption of "the two CP's from a single country" concept, the meeting could turn into a real donnybrook. Inviting both Chinese and Soviet factions from a single country would be consistent with the Rumanian party's "principles," but it would be diametrically opposed to Moscow's fundamental reasons for desiring such gatherings--namely to isolate further the Chinese party.

Gomulka Switches View of Budapest Meeting

After long efforts on behalf of Communist unity to be expressed at the Budapest meeting through discussion of "what links our parties and not what separates them,"

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Gomulka appears to have realized that the conclave may turn into a brawl which will accomplish little or nothing.

On 17 February the party's weekly mouthpiece, Polityka, admitted that limiting the Budapest talks to issues on which agreement could be reached will be "impossible," and that "controversial problems, known to world public opinion, should also be submitted to open discussion in a party spirit." The article was written by chief editor Rakowski, who is close to Gomulka. The author subsequently told the French Ambassador in Warsaw that these words were "inspired" by Gomulka and accurately reflect his views.

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COMMENT: Rakowski's article caps other recent press evidence of a change in Polish attitude on the prospects of the Budapest meeting which began, significantly, with the announcement that Bucharest would attend the conference.

Brezhnev Leaves Prague for Home

After delivering a relatively mild speech plugging the forthcoming Budapest meeting but skirting controversial issues, Soviet party leader Brezhnev left Prague by air for home on 23 February. Czechoslovak party boss Dubcek saw him off at the airport with a group that did not include president and former party leader Novotny.

Brezhnev left it to Polish party leader Gomulka to press for a full discussion of all questions at the Budapest meeting, not excluding controversial problems. In his speech on 22 February, new party boss Dubcek stressed the parliamentary legality of the 1948 Communist takeover in Czechoslovakia, but raked over the coals subsequent party leaderships. He criticized the post-Stalin party leaders for "half-Hearted efforts...which created deficiencies whose consequences we feel even today, and called for a "rectification" of all mistakes "without reservation." Rumanian party chief, Ceausescu, spoke in familiar terms, but also urged that any forthcoming world conference of Communist parties be opened to all progressive groups, not merely to Communists.

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COMMENT: Notably, Brezhnev departed Prague without listening to Novotny, who as president is scheduled to speak today. The rest of the Soviet delegation is still there.

Yugoslav Delegates Leave for Czechoslovak

Yugoslav party presidium member Veljko Vlahovic left for Prague on 21 February to attend the 20th anniversary celebration of the Czechoslovak Communist regime. Vlahovic was accompanied by central committee member Bosko Siljegovic.

COMMENT: Sending a trusted subordinate allows Tito to feel-out the situation in Prague and the other East European leaders' reactions to it without publically appearing to drift closer to the Bloc. The presence of Siljegovic is puzzling. He was head of the Yugoslav central committee commission for international affairs during the Rankovic era and has been out of the limelight for a year and a half.

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East German Foreign Minister Visits Cairo

The West German news agency DPA reported from Cairo that East German Foreign Minister Otto Winzer arrived in that city on 21 February. Winzer was welcomed by Egyptian Foreign Minister Riad. According to the Egyptian press, Winzer was scheduled to remain in Cairo only one day.

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COMMENT: Winzer's visit to Cairo.

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undoubtedly is connected with a new East German attempt to obtain diplomatic recognition from "third-world" countries. East German delegations are now visiting India and Syria,

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The US Embassy in Rangoon also has reported that Winzer, or a deputy, will visit Burma.

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The East Germans obviously hope to press the line that the resumption of diplomatic relations between Bonn and Belgrade means that Bonn will be unable to stop other countries from establishing diplomatic relations with Pankow.

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